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THE  
SECRET  
WAY



ZONA GALE



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1ST ED.

**THE SECRET WAY**

*By*  
ZONA GALE

BIRTH

CHRISTMAS

MOTHERS TO MEN

HEART'S KINDRED

FRIENDSHIP VILLAGE


NEIGHBORHOOD TALES

PEACE IN FRIENDSHIP VILLAGE

WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL

FRIENDSHIP VILLAGE LOVE STORIES

THE LOVES OF PELLEAS AND ETTARRE



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# THE SECRET WAY

BY

ZONA GALE

New York

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1921

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"A great life, an entire civilization lies just outside the pale of common thought. . . . Such life is different from any yet imagined. . . . I see as clearly as the noonday that this is not all. I see other and higher conditions than existence. . . . The very idea that there is another Idea is something gained."

—RICHARD JEFFRIES.





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## PART I



## EARLY VERSE

### THE SECRET WAY

Stark on the window's early grey  
Lined out in squares by casement bars,  
She saw her lily lift to take  
The sinking stars.

Within the room's delaying dark  
Intimate things lay dim and still  
With all their day-time friendliness  
Gone false and chill.

Her hand upon the coverlet,  
Her face low in the linen's cleft,  
They were as wan as water-flowers  
By light bereft.

And never was bloom brought to her couch  
But shed the odour of a sigh

Because she was as white as they,  
And they must die.

“O Pale, lit deep within the dark  
Of your young eyes, a stifled light  
Leaps thin and keen as melody  
And leavens night.

“It is a light that did not burn  
When you were gay at mart and fair;  
O Pale, what is that starry fire,  
Fed unaware?”

Then softly she: “I may not tell  
What other eyes behold in mine;  
But I have melted night and day  
In some wild wine.

“I may not read the graven cup  
Exhaustless as a brimming bell  
Distilling silver; but I drank  
And all is well.



“One morn like this, bitter still,  
I waited for the early stir  
Of those who slept the while I watched  
What muffled wonders were.

“I saw my lily on the sill;  
I saw my mirror on the wall  
Take light that was not; and I saw  
My spectral taper tall.

“Why I had known these quiet things  
Since I could speak. Yet suddenly  
They all touched hands and in one breath  
They spoke to me.

“I may not tell you what they said.  
The strange part is that I must lie  
And never tell you what we say——  
These things and I.

“I only know that common things  
Bear sudden little spirits set  
Free by the rose of dawn and by  
Night's violet.

"I only know that when I hear  
Clear tone, the haunted echoes bear  
Legions of little winged feet  
On printless air.

"And when warm colour weds my look  
A word is uttered tremblingly,  
With meaning fall—but I know not  
What it may be.

"I only know that now I find  
Abiding beauty everywhere;  
Or if it bide not, that it fades  
Is still more fair.

I long to question those I love  
And yet I know not what to say;  
I am alone as one upon  
Some secret way.

"My words are barren of my bliss;  
The strange part is that I must lie  
And never tell you what we say—  
These things and I.

“So will it be when I am not.  
A little more perhaps to tell;  
Yet then as now I may not say  
What I know well.”

She died when all the east was red.  
And we are they who know her fate  
Because we love the way of life  
That she had found too late.

## TERZA RIMA

### I: OLD TALK

Old Eyselot sees what never is.  
She says: "Pale lights move on the hill,  
Deep in the air are treasures."

She says: "I never go to mill  
Wood-way but something walks with me,  
So go wood-way I always will.

Wood-walking, I go mad to see  
What will die out just as I turn  
To catch it by the crooked tree.

I pass the bush that I saw burning  
With wild black flame at full of moon.  
That was a sight to set one learning

What things one merely doubts at noon.  
A-well, I know not what I learned.  
God send that you may learn it soon.



Windows for walls, thoughts that have turned  
Back into folk, gateways of horn,  
And the wild hearts that men have burned,

These things I see. And ay, one morn  
I saw the little people bear  
Away my little child new-born.

They gave her food yielded in air,  
Honey and rose-down.

I looked and she was very fair.

So when the people of the town  
(Who did not know) believed her dead  
And wrapped her in a cloudy gown

I did not mourn. I only said:  
"She is the daughter of the Day  
And with the Night she has been wed.

"I am the mother of that one  
Born for two worlds. And I am she  
Who sees more things than moon and sun  
And little stars will ever see."

\* \* \*

Old Eyelot sees what never is.  
She says: "Green lights move on the leas,  
Deep in the air are treasures."  
I wonder what old Eyelot sees?

## II: MAGIC

An ancient wildwood showed its heart to me.  
(O Little Wind that brought me what it said!)  
I went within its great nave reverently.

There dwelt the silence ever lightly wed  
With winged sound. There the persuading green  
Took ancient citadels with soundless tread.

Was not the opening blue of buds between  
Soft solitary leaves a lyric set  
To music of the things that lift and lean?

My hands were mother-tender of the net  
Of silk they found. My feet were light  
To loose no dew from the least violet.

The fragile fabric of dissolved night  
Seemed in the air. A million little minds  
Kept concert in the very realm of sight.

O— and suddenly as sunlight finds  
White towers I heard the ancient wood unfold  
Its ancient secret piped by little winds.

“Behold the beauty in me. O behold  
The beauty that makes utter peace, in me;  
Beauty that is immeasurably old.”

The whole world like a bell heard echoingly.  
Words wonderful! I found a fairy bed  
And saw that which the wildwood let me see.  
(O Little Wind that brought me what it said!)

### III: NIGHT IS HERE

Night is here and star-rise  
And demeanour of the dark.

Visioned by my closed eyes

Now I lie within an arc.

Lyric loom,

All the silence is a-hark

For a poppy bud to bloom

In some flowery harmony

Woven through this quiet room.

Prick of light and shadow take me,

Fire and stars and voices keep,

Fairy clamour will not wake me . . .

. . . Sleep.

But that warm grave of sleep

Nothing save myself immures.

Singing light and dreaming deep

Now my spirit walks with yours.

## BALLADES OF THREE SENSES

### I

#### BALLADE OF EYES THAT SEE

Leaves loosened when there blow  
No winds; long fields whose green  
Dim beneath the darling bow  
Of the May-moon is seen;  
Robins at dawn; the keen  
Sour odour of vines—these show  
Frail meanings caught between  
The bourne of yes and no.  
Yet there is tender art  
To fathom what they mean,  
Deep in the heart.

I go among them. Now I lean  
Where willows fret the flow  
Of water that has been



For miles to glean.  
And in the osiers— O  
An ouphe, an elfin queen.  
I did not see her—lo,  
The osiers did not part,  
Yet she was there I ween,  
Deep in the heart.

*Envoy*

Spells, lay upon the screen  
The things that move me so.  
I ask the better part:  
To see with eyes serene  
What things these others know——  
Deep in the heart.

## II

### BALLADE OF LISTENING

On summer slopes lit white  
With old desire of day,  
The air with pearl bedight  
Prepares for gold array.  
The sun-drugged stars delay  
To die; the winds take fright  
And question, and betray  
Frail sounds for my delight.  
O voice of ancient springs!  
O little echo-flight!  
O harp of things!

In grasses that lie bright,  
In grasses that lie grey,  
Up on the clouded height  
Down in the zone of May

Are printless feet astray.  
Airy the hands that smite  
The lyre in nameless lay;  
And the great gods invite  
Echo of earth chantings  
On quiet wing away.  
O—harp of things!

*Envoy*

Harp, is it this that you say?  
“Delicate is my might,  
Quickening the voice that sings;  
For I am sense grown fey.  
I am word of the morn and the night.”  
O harp of things!

### III

#### BALLADE OF OLD PERFUMES

Now out of dream old springs

Flow soft with many red

And golden fluttering things.

Sweetly from underhead

All the wan air is fed

With faint rememberings

Of hours long buried.

Rose-rumours steal and stir;

They come on wind-like wings.

The old odours that were

Nard and mint and myrrh.

I think that as there clings

Colour to blossoms shed,

So love and all that sings,

So hearts that beat and bled

Were with old fragrance wed.  
Now when the garden flings  
On many a secret thread  
Sweets to the wanderer,  
Some buried witch-bell rings  
The old odours that were  
Nard and mint and myrrh.

*Envoy*

Spring, let me lay my head  
Where the wild season sings  
Some dead girl's heart from her.  
O young heart, ages dead,  
Old odours thrill mute strings.  
The old odours that were  
Nard and mint and myrrh.

### HOKKU

The way that shadow fell along the floor!  
I too have waited for a shadow.

### HOKKU

Two butterflies. Two birds. O the wide night  
of space.  
Sweet, hold me close.

### HOKKU

Yellow I see is my close friend.  
She can create a sun.

### HOKKU

I would have stayed the dawn down the dark sky.  
But there were many dawns.



### HOKKU

A child's faint cry. But you and I have had  
A birth since birth. Only there was no cry.

### HOKKU

A candle flame. My love has put it out.  
It did not know its bliss. Shall I, in death?

### HOKKU

Cloths, fans, stones slumberous, colour and fancy  
and lilt.  
No hard straight place to be. O quiet sky.

### HOKKU

I made a garden. Afterward it died.  
It never even knew it was a garden.

## SONNETS AND VARIATIONS

### WHEN DID SPRING DIE?

When did Spring die? I did not see her go  
Down the bright lane she painted. All flower-still  
She moved among her emblems on the hill  
Touching away their burden of old snow.  
Was it on some great down where long winds flow  
That the wild spirit of Spring went out to fill  
The eyes of Summer? Did a daffodil  
Lift the pale urn remote where she lies low?

O not as other moments did she die,  
That woman-season outlined like a rose.  
Before the banner of Autumn's scarlet bough  
The Summer fell; and Winter with a cry  
Wed with March wind. Spring did not die like  
those

But vaguely, as if Love had prompted: Now.

## ONE DAWN SHE WOKE ME——

One dawn she woke me when the darkness lay  
Faint on the Summer fields. The air  
Was like a question. Green was grey  
With dew distilled in delitesence where  
Covert, the night-folk wrought. She said:

“Dear one,  
It is our holiday.” Forth we went  
Finding new kindred, new bequest of sun,  
Inheriting again the firmament.

Long ago . . .

The old years lie upon her grave like flowers.  
The alchemy of hours  
Has made me someone whom she would not know.  
How strangely that frail morning lives and towers  
When I am other and when she lies low.

THERE ARE WITHIN US LIVES WE  
NEVER LIVE

There are within us lives we never live  
By sense or soul, for being does not know  
To tell their depth or breast their flow  
Or to taste the sweetness that they give.  
And now in distance, now in voices still,  
In pity or in harmony, in sleep,  
We lead unconscious lives, old, deep,  
Upon the far slope of an unknown hill.

Is it not here that life walks wreathed at last?  
Many a soul meets many a soul with this:  
That muted lips and wistful eyes are passed  
In silence; yet a sign there is  
Burning in air, though but a shadow fall  
Or some pale sunbeam steal along the wall.

LAST NIGHT I DREAMED I SAW MY  
MOTHER YOUNG

Last night I dreamed I saw my mother young.  
I never knew her till her hair was grey ;  
Last night I saw the shadows lit away  
And pearls about her shoulders strung.  
Out from our haunts of home among  
She came as if she knew them not. There lay  
Old hope in her young eyes. And gay  
Her speech came in some laughing tongue.

I who had watched the stolen march of days  
And would not see the theft which was their sign  
Moved happily to meet her, mute with praise  
For this the witchery that made her fair.  
But yet the pretty hand that lay in mine  
Was not the one I love upon my hair.

## WHY AM I SILENT?

Why am I silent? Tell me how to speak  
With all the sweet familiars of the way;  
Call Summer by her name; and with the Day  
Walk royally companioned cheek on cheek  
For that faint speech awhile withheld, that weak  
Task of the Word undone is the great Nay,  
The winged thunder that denies the ray.  
Yet once when first I saw the hapless Greek  
By present impulse of the god urged on  
Seek out the shadow of the awful grove,  
I felt the word. I caught it once again  
In a sweet flash of arrowy sun that shone  
Thickening on flowers. But when  
You sorrowed, Love,  
I knew it then. . . .



I WANDERED WHERE THE WONDER  
OF THE SKY——

I wandered where the wonder of the sky  
Was wide upon me. Isle beyond isle the east  
Was signing that the Summer night had ceased  
Upon the dawn. Then came a stranger by  
Immersed in the magic as was I.

We stood together at the sorcerer's feast  
Saying half-words; and as the day increased  
We parted with a farewell almost shy.

Something was there. There was drawn silently  
Through into life some fiery, clouded thing.

O wise

For one sweet flash of time we stood to see  
Death and the Inbeing  
Lie dreaming in each other's eyes.

## HERE A STILL FIELD

Here a still field. I move within the green,  
It lies aloof. Look where I will  
The steady glory of noon on the hill  
Lays its divine indifference on the scene.  
I seem too far. I listen and I lean,  
Yet never will the burying hours fulfill  
One hope of nearness to the Far and Still,  
But wound me with the sweet that they might  
mean.

Is there no keener speech for us than this  
Old incommunicable urge to know  
The speech of silence. . . . Yes—here a still field !  
What more—what more ? For here the Comrade is,  
The God who waits alone and would have sealed  
Our compact with glad laughter long ago.

## RETURN

How they come back . . . I never see retreat  
Down the long beach the phalanx of bright foam  
But faint across the fields that fold them home  
I hear the rhythmic fall of speeding feet.  
And they who loved the garden of the sea  
And died, come back. I never know a land  
Of cities but there come to me  
Their dead to touch my hand.

Dead, who dare not let your eyes  
Flower from the dusk and flame into our own,  
Yet come you as hushed notes in harmonies  
To ways of life that you have known:  
Virgil in blowing spray round swift-prowed ships,  
Dante in every cry of lips for lips.

## BY MY SIDE ALL DAY ANOTHER WENT

By my side all day another went.

We breathed the cold spiced air of the Spring dark  
Before the dawn; together at the hark

Of noon we listened; and we bent

To borrow from still grasses the warm scent

Of afternoon and dusk. We stood to mark

The deathless ark

Unveiled before the light was spent.

Prodigal of sweetness that old day

I passed, nor might

See how that one beside me stooped to lay

Something aside. Now in the night

The gleaner hunts me down

Bringing regret. I wear it for a crown.

## IN J. P. P.'s METRE

### I

Here a vine, there a voice,  
Then a violin;  
All the quiet is astir  
Like a flute within.

Here a light, there a leaf,  
Little boughs that lean;  
And the people who move by  
Wonder what they mean.

"Look," they say, "there a star  
Watching in a well;  
Line and green and melody——"  
Then they try to tell.

O why ask what they mean?  
What is there to win?  
Have we not the light, the leaf  
And the violin?

## II

All the air is liveried  
In a kind of white;  
It is not like the darkness  
Or the light;  
It is like the covenant  
Of a clearer sight.

Now a sudden bud is born  
Burning in the dew;  
There the fog rose palely lifting  
All as if it knew  
The faint flowing speech  
Of the friendly blue.

Oh the little hurrying wing  
Like a blowing leaf;  
Oh the shadows gathering in  
Many a sheaf;  
There a cloud is carved like some  
Airy coral reef.



Like a new sense these venture  
In the veins and lo,  
All the blood is musical  
In its beat and flow;  
And we wait wondering  
What new thing we know.

### III

#### TO A POET

Woo a little choir of words,  
Teach them to sing;  
Let them thrill the air like birds  
Love-summoning.  
Thread the silence with a lute,  
Sound the spiral of a flute.  
. . . Vain, but vain. The words are mute.

Open now your own heart  
Where a rose may be;  
Live your love and use your art,  
Make melody,  
For your joy, your joy is there,

Sing the secret thing you bear!  
    . . . Only silence everywhere.  
  
    . . . Show the ancient pain that lies  
With remembered things  
Down the dark within your eyes  
Where nothing sings.  
Now at last there throng  
Images that waited long,  
And the silence flowers in song.

## EXERCISE IN SPENSERIANS

The air is purged of gold and in its stead  
Is poured a fire of silver on the green ;  
And now the moon new-risen from the dead  
Of dearer nights than this finds her demesne  
Lonely of stars, as they to greet their queen  
Had rushed in argent riot from the blue  
To spill themselves like flowers or waste un-  
seen

In stealing perfumes that elude and woo  
As now eludes now woos the wind the sweet night  
through.

Down from her turret when the dusk was new  
The Lady Margot stepped and lured by wile  
Of faint near things that croon of what they  
do

With wandering touch she thought to walk  
the while

The hours were printless on the idle dial.  
Deep in a garden lamped with lily bells  
Which hold the light as does some opal vial  
She took her way near where a fountain wells  
And wakes its rainbow ribbons into madrigals.

Fluttering she peered within the hollow  
gloom  
That cloistered a wild wood beyond the wall;  
For shapes are woven by the troubled loom  
Of night; and tremulous tapestries oft fall  
Across familiar paths and make them all  
Astir with effigies that snarl and grin  
And take strange steps along a horrid hall  
Which is by day a lane of leaves within;  
As if at night a holy nun should dream of sin.

At length she reached a little windless glade  
Fragrant with natal April not long flown  
And dreamful of the days when lips were laid  
On lips that trembled as they found their own.  
There where the mooned close was thickest  
sown

With shadows was the lady met with one  
Who sat with drooping head and made soft  
moan.

He was a stranger knight whose armour shone  
Bright as the molten golden javelins of the sun.

“What things are griefs?” the Lady Margot  
sighed

And moved a little nearer pityingly.

“The wonder wasteth from my days,” he  
cried,

“The burden of my blessings wearieth me!

Lo I have journeyed from an unoared sea

In the white north to where the winds caress

Warm sail-sown oceans murmuring round a  
key

Odorous with wine and fruit in fragrant  
dress——

And yet I passion for some little happiness.”

“Ay, now,” the lady cried, “most strangely  
come

Are you, Sir Knight, for I am one who longs

As never heart has longed before for some  
Strange world, strange tongue tuneful with  
alien songs,

Strange mad old cities brooding on their  
wrongs,

With unfamiliar streets which smile and show  
Me many a colonnade and portico

Where some unclaimed and starry hour be-  
longs.

O you who know all that I long for—bid me go!"

No strange thing seemed her prayer unto the  
knight

Who knew her father's little court by name,  
And pitied her that all her beauty bright  
Must fail and fade in such confined fame.

Swiftly he knelt to her and with no shame  
She gave her hand the while he led her where  
Within the close the moon took silvery aim  
And lured a sickle bed of bloom to bear

In bloom's sweet stead a birth of stars pearly as  
air.

The lady stooped and laid her little hand  
Upon a dreaming lily whose faint cream  
And gold, stirred at the fingers' soft demand,  
Dreamed that the white touch was their sweet-  
est dream.

The lady rose and every opiate beam  
Made lucent pillage from her unbound hair  
And moths brushed lightly through the saf-  
fron stream

In quest of stars. The lady was so fair  
That the dusk swooned with passion and the light  
with prayer.

"Nay, now, my child," the knight said cour-  
teously,

"Would that your joy lay in your castle home,  
In phantom folk who pace your broidery,  
In haunted parchment of a pictured tome.  
But if you are of those whose hearts must  
roam

Afar afield to meet the hushed advance



Of spheres and win from the blown spray and  
foam

What weaker some leave to impotent chance  
Then, by my blade, that blade shall bring deliver-  
ance!"

A little door, covert in creeping green,  
Gave from the court upon the room where lay  
The aged doting nurse who wept, I ween,  
At all the Lady Margot strove to say.  
But when it had proved vain to weep or pray,  
She rose and bade her trembling fingers light  
Her taper and thereby she led the way  
Through secret gates till, soberly bedight,  
The three set forth together in the faery night.

O many a league for many a day they went,  
And some magician kind they were aware  
Delivered captive treasures and spent  
His lavish store of beauty everywhere:  
Slim brazen towers that taught the sun to  
share

Its shining he revealed; and odorous gloom

Packing with odours the receiving air;  
Flowered silken sails that set the sea abloom;  
Isles spread with fabrics from the moon's high  
loom.

Sometimes the lady knelt in a fleet prow  
That flung the gaudy bubbles from the blue,  
And joyed to hear the lean blade of the bow  
Plunging the thundering sundered breakers  
through;  
Keen swept the foam-born breaths of salt,  
to do  
Sweet violence to her pale cheek; and all  
The spirit of her fancy peopled new  
The perilous sea's impermanent citadel  
That kindled into spray with the ship's rise and  
fall.

Sometimes she stepped within a pillared way  
Dim grey with shade and honey-bright with  
sun

Where all the costly stuffs for barter lay,  
And she might hear how many a drowsing one,

Stretched on a pea-cock patterned skin, would  
run  
Soft syllable along soft syllable  
Praising the violet and vermillion  
Of gems and cloths, right eager-tongued to  
tell  
News musical with names to one who loved them  
well.

Meanwhile the stranger knight was by her  
side  
Burning to serve and welcoming command;  
And never wish of hers might be denied  
For his swift sword was like a dexterous  
wand.  
And by her side in all that alien land  
The old nurse journeyed plaintive and perplexed,  
Condemning what she did not understand  
And with all other understanding vexed;  
Palsied and muttering charms for what should  
tide them next.

Then it befell that as they fared the knight  
Forgot his weariness and many a morn  
He faced with joy the lottery of light  
And walked no more apart in mood forlorn.  
And now, her tremulous shyness half outworn,  
The Lady Margot oft passed through a town  
And saw therein but trinkets to adorn  
Her little bodice and her silken gown;  
And when he spoke she looked up swiftly and  
looked down.

O sweet it was to see the two dream on.  
She wistful of the runes that he could teach  
Of men and cities dreamed that in such wan  
Delights lay life; and he for her sweet speech  
With all its faery fancies would beseech  
And dreamed that in such fancies lay delight!  
And all the time the heart of each for each  
Was calling with the ancient urge of night  
For night what time the lotus of the dawn is white.

At length they came to a melodious marge

Where with sweet perturbation the moved  
sea

Crept lovingly about the land in large  
Embrace and from such soft nativity  
The music mounted in dissolving key  
And wed with wind. There in a crescent  
cove

Sun-lorn and still, the eyes of each leaped free  
And all the world in a wild silence strove  
To bare its spirit in their breathed words of love.

“O Sweet, my Sweet,” the knight quoth rever-  
ently,

“Lo now the marvel: That I wearied sore  
On such a singing earth as this to be  
One whom the gods give ever one gift more!  
There is no spot from shore to patient shore  
That is not burdened with its waiting bliss;  
O yet, dear love, how little bliss it bore  
Were you not near to tremble at my kiss.

At last we know the truth: The best of life is  
this.”

Slow-dipped the idle sail without the bay  
Sun-smitten in the drowsy afternoon;  
Unimaged in the ripples' purple play  
White reefs of clouds on airy shores were  
    strewn.

All fairly the shadows fell and soon  
When gloaming was poured soft on beach and  
    foam

The sea gave up a silver shell—the moon.

Then tenderly she turned who longed to roam  
Afar and whispered: "Love, would that our way  
    led home!"

Nearby upon a rainbow drift of weeds  
The old nurse mumbled at her prayers and  
    charms,

And now her shaking fingers felt her beads,  
And now in incantation her old arms  
Were raised to shadowy powers. O grim  
    alarms

Beset the gaping ones when love appears!  
And never lovers' glance or kiss half warms

The world but that some dotard nods and  
leers  
And all the charnel souls are tip-toe with their  
fears.

Now silently across the glimmering sands  
Slow-paced the lady and the stranger knight,  
And there were clinging lips and clinging  
hands

And all the uses of the hour were bright;  
But when they came to where the moon was  
white

Upon the wet weeds, there the old dame lay  
Stark on the sea-moss and the labyrinth light  
Received her soul that knew it not. There  
may

Be heaven for such as mock at love but none can  
say.

Upon the sands the lady knelt and wept;  
Her lover kissed away her pitying tears;  
"Nay, tender soul," he said, "we have but kept  
The truce of nature with the yester-years.



Now are the old things passed away, and fears  
For the new day are vain. Therefore arise.  
Love vanquishes the past itself. Love hears  
The siren cities chant of home. Love's eyes  
Have lit a sullen world for me to Paradise."

Into the silver dark the lovers went,  
Over the silver sea to golden isles,  
Piping their songs of heavenly wonderment  
And fabling the unhaunted age with smiles.  
And ever with the swift melodious miles  
A sterner harmony breathed through their  
    bliss;  
"The old shall be outworn. That which re-  
    viles  
The gods shall perish by their ministries.  
But we will walk with truth: The best of life is  
    this."



## PART II



## I KNOW WHERE A DOVE——

I know where a dove sits brooding in the dark  
Nested in leaves the quiet boughs among;  
And when the midnight falls I lean to mark  
Her home where a star is hung.  
The star, it does not know the secret dove,  
The dove that firefly planet may not see.  
What lovelier things the night may fold from  
me——  
The watching eye, the brooding heart, and love.

## PROLOCUTOR

O for one of the stars to know me,  
To say "That is she" as I say "It is there."  
O for my hills to show me  
If they care.  
But when I speak to them nothing hears me.  
Even the bird on the near bough fears me.  
The fire on my hearth does not know that it cheers  
me.  
. . . Heart that waits by the fire, do you guess  
All you must voice in your tenderness?

## WONDER

Here are the shadows veiling green with grey  
And winning all the wonder from the light;  
Here phantom fragrance swells and fails like  
    sound;

The hour distills itself to dark; the day  
Dreams in its grave and lo, the dream is night.

Beloved, all the marvel of the May,  
The altared dark, the petals' solemn white,  
The moments rich with farewell from the lips  
Of dying moments—what are these? We lay  
Our love beside them and exceed the night.



## A MEETING

I hear a sound like piping and like sails  
In silken talk with wind and like the speech  
Of someone quiet in the blue of dawn  
Upon a quiet beach.

I see a light as when the last star  
Flowers faintly in the ashen morning sky  
And long wings appear and disappear,  
Wheeling by.

I think of moons forgotten with their tides;  
I think of all the red of east and west;  
I hear the secret stir of nameless dead  
Conferring in my breast.

You make me long for colour and for song  
And for old words on lips I did not know.  
You make me dream of all I learned to dream  
How long ago.

## HALF THOUGHT

O Day of Wind and laughter,  
A goddess born are you  
Whose eyes are in the morning  
Blue—blue.  
The slumberous noon your body is,  
Your feet are the shadows' flight.  
But the immortal soul of you  
Is night.

### EPITAPH

He loved to lie where Summer lay,  
His roof a cloud, a bough;  
There stretched full-length to dream all day.  
It is so with him now.

### EPITAPH

How fair a bride-groom Death must be.  
He took her in his arms,  
Her answering kiss now Spring is here  
The valley leafage warms.

### ALIAS

Between the dawn and the first breath  
Of dusk there slips away  
Something that partly is like death  
And partly is like day.

## IN ARVIA'S ROOM

### *For Her Cradle*

I cannot tell you what you ask.  
But of my life to be  
You who are wise and know your speech,  
Tell me.

### *For Her Mirror*

Look in the deep of me:  
What are we going to do?  
If I am I, as I am,  
Who in the world are you?

### *For a Comb of Ivory*

Use me and think of soul and mind and wonder  
yet to be.  
This is the jest: Could soul touch soul if it  
were not for me?

*For Her Doll's House*

Girl doll would be a silken flower and look as real  
flowers do;

Boy doll would be a telephone and have the world  
speak through.

The poet doll would like to be the doorbell with a  
tongue

For other little dolls like bells most sensitively  
rung.

The paper doll would be a queen, the Dinah doll a  
star,

And all—how ignominious!—are only what they  
are.

*For Her Candle-stick*

Taper, winnow the world of its angles and where  
Were sharp things lay softness, Night-god of the  
air!

*For the Chimney-place*

I am the causeway to the upper places

That the fire understands.

I am the link with everything unspoken.

How well I warm your hands.

*For a Flower Pot*

Call sweetness into being.

Let it live in me.

The seed, the soil, the sun and I

Work with authority.

*For the Telephone*

I the absurdity

Proving what cannot be.

Come, when you talk with me

Does it become you well

To doubt a miracle?

*Along Her Book-shelf*

Lay one hand on us; but keep the other free to  
touch far things which are not far—tenderly.

*Where Boughs Touch the Glass*

They lap on the indoor shore,

The waves of the leaf mere.

They say: We tell you as well as we can,

We wonder what you hear.



*For Her Window*

I see the stones, I see the stars,  
    I know not what I see.  
Things always say words to themselves  
    And now and then to me.  
But sometimes when I look between  
    Large stones and little stars  
I almost know—but what I know  
    Flies through the window bars.

## NON NOBIS

*Find me little doors of air,  
Let me in and in.  
I will come and go all day. . . .  
None will miss me from my place  
In the room, the porch, the lawn;  
And yet I shall have a way  
To enter and find quiet.*

*Knit me in a garment.  
Weave me in a spell.  
I shall look the same to them.  
They will see me in the street  
In the shop, the car, the hall,  
And yet all the time I shall be my own,  
In a place where they do not come.*

*Will you not, dare you not,  
Is it never meet?  
I will never let them know——*

*Sweet, my Spirit, pardon me!*

*I had forgot that stars are new*

*And that it is the dawn of earth.*

Doors and garments and spells I must make for  
myself.

Among ten thousand of us I must find silence.

## HALF THOUGHT

I saw Fair Yellow in the west,  
Fair Yellow in the air,  
The sand, the corn, a bird's breast,  
A woman's hair.

At night

My little room burst into light——  
Fair Yellow had come there.

Fair Yellow is a being.

For when I said her name

I found a way of seeing

Her as she came.

O how

Do our dull senses fail us now

And leave us in some elemental shame!

There is so much to see and say

If we could find the way. . . .

## UMBRA

The birds of the air are about me  
For I am the conjuring one;  
How they dip and hover and circle  
Through hyaline regions of sun.

One has a wing like a petal,  
One wears a feather of flame,  
Silk and snow is the breast of another  
With a word like a flute for a name.

How they sing . . . in the morning,  
Tilting soft the light beat of their flight;  
How their passionate chorales give cadence  
Down the ample arcade of the night.

Yes, the songs of the air are about me  
Sweet . . . clear . . . but they sing  
Of the light of another morning  
In the deep of another Spring.

## WRAITHS

Who hears the answer when I cry?

O quiet hours and empty blue——

You?

But the echoful air beats back no sigh.

Who is glad of the love that I give the green?

O haunted hollow in tide of leaves,

Who weaves

Delight of mine on the flowery screen?

Who harbours that little straying ghost

Of our thought for each other before we knew

Love true?

Warm, warm in my heart and never lost.

## HALF THOUGHT

Believe not Sorrow, her who brings  
Confession of the folded wings,  
But seek you, burning, some frail birth  
That sings.

It is her spirit beating through.  
Handful of earth,  
It may be breath to you!

## WIND SONG

Horn of the morning!  
And the little night pipings fail.  
The day is launched like a hollow ship  
With the sun for a sail.  
The way is wide and blue and lone  
With all the miles inviolate,  
Save for the swinging stars they've sown  
And a thistle of cloud remote and blown.  
O I passion for something nearer than these!  
How shall I know that this live thing is I  
With only the morning for proof and the sky?  
I long for a music more dear to its keys,  
For a touch that shall teach me the new sureties,  
Give me some griefs and some loyalties  
And a child's mouth on my own . . .  
Lullaby,  
Babe of the world, swing high,



Swing low.

I am a mother you never may know,

But oh,

And oh, how long the wind will know you,

With lullaby for the dead night through.

Babe of the earth, as I blow . . . .

Swing high,

To touch at the sky,

And at last lie low.

Lullaby . . . .

## HALF THOUGHT

When all the leaves of Spring turn gold  
And the wind has no song,  
To whom then does the changeling green  
Belong?

And who on what far waveless shore  
Harps as Spring wind shall harp no more  
In Winter's beat and roll?

O You, who such forgotten beauties hold,  
Find some faint loveliness unseen  
And save it in a soul.

## T R O T H

To-day an odour lay upon the air  
And did not fall from any mortal flower.  
Deep they won their way within the hour  
Who laid that odour there.

A perfume as of all that cannot give  
A perfume—ivory and ore,  
Colour and cloud and pearl and marl; and store  
Of the wild aroma of cave and hive.

It was an inner perfume filtering  
From other level than the great Midgard;  
From a far and sphery home full-friendlier starred  
Where marvels lift light wing.

By fragrance, fire and music do we prove  
The tender contact of a lovelier day,  
And these fair guarantors gently outray  
From their far home—these three and also love.

BELOVED, IT IS DAYBREAK ON  
THE HILLS

Beloved, it is daybreak on the hills.  
Dark glimmers and goes out in cloudy light.  
Faint on the marge of night the watchet dawn  
Lifts like a lily from a quiet water.  
And that within me which is consonant  
Is at its door to meet God's infinite.

O Love, what banner shall we lift? And what  
Timbrel and incense bear? How shall we greet  
God's day, his hills, his fire, and join their beauty?  
Voices reply that are no voice but breath:  
"Like beauty be thou nothing save his vesture."

## C R E D O

O you not only worshipful but dear  
Now have I learned not merely majesty  
But gentleness and friendlihood to be  
Your way of drawing near.

And late, upon a blue and yellow day,  
Wandering alone along a hill of Spring  
I caught another tender summoning,  
As if you were the comrad of my play.

How strange that I have looked so lone and far  
When it is you, Great Love, who lonely are.  
How I have sought you in your cosmic leisure  
When you are eager in my childish pleasure.

Why there is no dim doctrine to believe!  
Only to feel this touching at my sleeve.

## WHO IS THIS THAT IS SO NEAR?

Who is this that is so near?  
Not a face and not a voice.  
But a sense of someone here,  
Or of something not ourselves.

At no altar, from no ark——  
Is it He? O wonderful  
In the day and in the dark  
To behold Him by no eyes.

Is it They? Ask us not who.  
As trees know when creatures pass,  
We may know when Those look through  
From another kind of day.

He and They within our sense.  
As we hope of bird or root:  
"Lo, it has intelligence!"  
Hidden ones may hope of us.

## IN MOST ONE

Brilliant and lone she sat  
Upon eternal height  
And veiled her face about.  
She was in fear of sin,  
She was in fear of deadly night,  
I saw her eyes peer out.

I saw her eyes peer out  
And knew she was divine,  
But oh, her stedfast, dreadful gaze  
And her importunate doubt.  
She did not make me word or sign  
Or turn away her face.

She did not make word or sign,  
But as she watched me err  
Her eyes grew cold like the dark star  
And her body ceased to shine.

I could not breathe for the breath of her  
Was frost of Winter and fire of war.

Her body ceased to shine.

I dare not let her die.

I opened my heart to the sun

And I breathed her breath for mine.

Behold, that Inmost One was I,

And I was the inmost one.

I opened my heart to the sun.

O colour and line, and birth

Of wonder and word and light!

Through love and her I have won

The earth within the earth

And the sight that is more than sight.

O colour and line and birth,

Birth of an order new,

Of a life that is more than my own . . .

Birth that is your birth . . .

Birth in me of you

O God, brilliant and lone!



## STONE CELL

Let me not see thee, Lord God of my essential life,  
where thou art not.

Let me not look upon colour and pray to thee be-  
lieving thee to be colour.

Let me not go in silence or in dream and dream  
thee to be that silence.

With the failing of the light let me not thrill at  
the intricate touch of that spirit

Who films light to shadow, and kneel believing  
ecstasy to be prayer.

From my dreams, from the siren singing and the  
imperious call,

From the blinding joy and the august mystery of  
simple beauty

Wilt not thou, compassionate, O deliver me, faint  
for beauty.

God! If I were praying to be delivered from  
thee . . .

## LIGHT

We do not touch the texture of the light.  
But one may see with a secret eye  
The things that are.  
Then we divine that we need not die  
To win our heritage of sight.  
As well this earth as any other star.

Waking from dream there trails an alien air,  
A residue of other suns than these;  
We know that we have walked an inner way,  
Have met familiars there  
And kept our step in exquisite concord  
The while we spoke some unremembered word.  
And over all there lay  
Light whose vibrations ran to other keys  
Than those we woke upon. Light whose long play  
Was dappled colour delicately kissed.

Strange fires rayed from strange regions of the  
Lord.

Light from the sun behind the sun fell where  
We went to keep our tryst.

In sleep and in the solitary dusk there come  
Fine lines of light upon the lowered lids,  
A flush that lets us in the heart of night  
And hints dear wonders to be there at home;  
As if the universal fabric bids  
Its human pattern know that all is light.

In snow

Have we not seen the whiteness smitten through  
With sudden rays of glory, vague with veils,  
Of some beloved hue that pales  
To earthly rose and violet and blue?

Oh you

Who pulse within that light—we know, we know!

Soon

From without transition night  
We would come into this, our own.  
Then the dim tune

The which we almost hear,  
The low-keyed colour and the word  
We have not heard,  
All these we shall be shown,  
And infinitely near  
To God, breathe for our breath his light.

## HALF THOUGHT

I close my eyes and on the night

A face looks in at me.

It speaks a word like burning light,

I answer joyfully.

It dims away. The word is sped.

I know not what we two have said.

The old dark sparkles like a star.

And when shall we be touched with sight

To find the things that are?

## CONTOURS

I am glad of the straight lines of the rain;  
Of the free blowing curves of the grain;  
Of the perilous swirling and curling of fire;  
The sharp upthrust of a spire;  
Of the ripples on the river  
Where the patterns curl and quiver  
And sun thrills;  
Of the innumerable undulations of the hills.  
But the true line is drawn from my spirit to some  
    infinite outward place . . .  
That line I cannot trace.

## PART III





# NEWS NOTES OF PORTAGE, WISCONSIN

## I

### THE KILBOURN ROAD

In June the road to Kilbourn is a long green hall,  
A corridor of leafage pillared white  
By birches and with wild-rose patterns on the wall,  
And all melodious with the fluid fall  
Or lift of red-winged blackbirds fluting mating  
cries.

The very air  
Is visible, not by the light,  
Not by the shades that drift  
And dip, but by an essence rhythmic with the  
flood

That flows  
Not in the sap, not in the blood,  
But elsewhere.

And of that essence grows  
All men see in the air of Paradise.

He lay upon a little upland slope  
Deep, deep with grass.  
And when I saw his head above the green  
Where I must pass,  
The battered hat, the squinting eyes  
Blinking the westering sun, I felt a sting of  
fear——

Alas, that in June's delicate demesne  
A watching human face can teach one fear.  
So then I spoke to him, gave him good day,  
And seeing his gun said what I always say  
Meeting a huntsman: "Friend, I hope  
You have killed nothing here."  
He stared and grinned. And with his grin  
I felt his trustiness. So when  
He scrambled down the bank and followed me,  
I waited for him as my kind and kin.

He was a thing of seventeen. And men  
Compounded in his blood had set him here  
Wizened and hump-backed. But his little face  
Held something of the one he was to be

In some eternity.

He talked as freely as a child. He'd shot, he said,  
At a young wood-chuck. Now his gun was broke,  
And it'd cost a dollar and a half  
To mend it. Then I spoke  
About a little kerchief made of lace  
Lost on the road that day. He turned his head.  
"Did it have money in it, Lady?"—with quick  
    grace

Caught from some knightlier place.  
And when I asked him what he read  
He tried to rise to all my speech awoke.  
"A person give me a book a while ago.  
Oh, I donno  
The name—the cover's off. I got, I guess,  
Two pages done. Time the stock's fed  
I get so sleepy I jump into bed."  
—And with this, for defence, a rueful laugh.  
I named the town not two miles distant. No,  
He hardly ever went there. Motion picture show?  
His eyes lit. Several times he'd been.

War pictures was the best. He liked to kill?  
He hung his head. "No, but I never will  
Shoot pups or kittens when they want me to.  
War's different." School? He'd seen  
Four years of that—well, four years, more or less.  
Dad needed him—dad had so much to do.

So then I faced him and his need to live.  
I put it plain: "But you?  
What do you want to do?"  
His answer lay within him, ready made.  
He met my eyes with all he had to give.  
"I'd like," he said, "to learn the artist trade."

Questioned, he told me bit by little bit.  
He'd had a horse that died—he'd painted her.  
He'd painted Tige, the dog. The pigeon house.  
The fence that crossed the slough. The willow tree.  
Would he let me see?  
Oh, well—they wasn't much. He couldn't stir——  
The paint right, and he didn't have enough.  
All that he'd done was rough.

I tried to spell his dream,—to see if his face lit  
At flame of it.

He only said: "Mebbe I couldn't learn."

And his eyes did not burn.

("Perhaps," I thought, "there's nothing here at  
all.")

"Dad's going to have me paint the house," he said.

I questioned where he led.

"Yellow and brown," he answered. And my  
fancy's fall

He must have fathomed in my face for a slow red  
Mounted and swept his cheek. His eyes sought  
mine,

His look was piteous with a kind of light.

"I don't like that. They picked it out," he said.

"I wanted white."

And all his tone was shame.

The craftsman wounded in his craftsman's right

In ways he could not name.

He took the cross-road. Where I saw him go

Wild fever-few made narrow paths of snow

Through the flat fields of dying afternoon.  
Bravely in tune  
With every little part as with some whole  
A red wing answered to an oriole  
And met a cat bird's call.  
The sun! The sun! The road to Kilbourn like  
a long green hall!  
The very air a spirit like our own  
So nearly shown  
That one could almost see.  
The veil so thin that presence was outrayed.  
But all the great blue day came facing me,  
And crying from the vault and from the sod:  
"Oh God, oh God.  
'*I'd like,*' he said, '*to learn the artist trade!*' "

## II

### VIOLIN

One night on some light errand I sat beside  
The cooking-stove in Johann's sitting-room.  
Within there was the cheer of lamp and fire,  
The stove-draught yawning red and wide,  
The table with its rosy cotton spread,  
A blue chair-cover from a home-land loom,  
A baby's bed.

And in that odour of cleanliness and food  
Johann, the labourer worthy of his hire  
For seven days a week, twelve hours a day  
At some vague toil "down in the yard."  
"Hard?

What o' that? Look at the luck I've got to keep  
the place  
And draw my pay."



He had been strong  
And still his body kept its ruggedness.  
Yet he was old and stiffened and he moved  
As one who is wrapped round in something thick.  
But O, his face,  
His face was like the faces that look out  
From bark and bole of trees all marred and  
    grooved,  
All laid about  
With old varieties of silence and of wrong.  
Such faces are locked long  
In men, in stones, in wood, in earth,  
Awaiting birth.  
And Johann's face was less  
Expectant than the happy dead awaiting to become  
    the quick.

His wife said much about how hard she tried.  
She chattered high and shrill  
About the burden and the eating ill.  
His mother, little, thin, half-blind and cross,  
With scarlet flannel round her throat,



Put in her note,  
Muttered about the cold, the draught, her side——  
Small ineffectual chants of little loss,  
With never a word  
Of the great gossip which she had not heard:  
That life had passed her by.  
The little room beset me like the din  
And prick of scourges. All  
At once I looked upon the spattered wall  
And saw a violin.

*A hall  
Vast, bright and breathing.  
In the upper air  
A chord, a flower of tone, a quiet wreathing  
Along the lift and fall  
Of some clear current in the blood  
Now delicately understood,  
Till all the hearing ones below  
Are where  
The voices call.  
O now they know*

*What music is. It is that which they are  
Themselves. Infinite bells,  
Of silence in a little sheath. Deep wells  
Of being in a little cup. Star upon star  
Veiled save one reaching ray.  
And see! The people turn  
And for a breath they look  
Out into one another's eyes  
And shine and burn  
Wise, wise,  
With ultimate knowledge of the goal  
That seeks one whole.  
And how  
Eternity begins  
And ever is beginning now  
A thousand hearts learn from the violins.*

"My back ain't right. My head ain't right. I'm  
almost dead.

Fill the hot water bag. I'm goin' to bed . . ."

"Ten pairs of socks I've darned to-night. I try  
To do the best I can . . ."

I put the women by.

"Johann," I said, "you play?" He shook his head.

"I lost it, loggin'——" he held up a stump of thumb.

"I took six lessons once," he said.

I sat there, dumb.

From out the inner place of music there had come  
Long long ago,

Some viewless one to tell him how to know

What waits upon the page

To beat the rhythm of the world. He heard; and  
tried

To stumble toward the door graciously wide  
For other feet than his.

"I took six lessons once," he said with pride.

This

Was all we gave him of his heritage.

### III

#### NORTH STAR

His boy had stolen some money from a booth  
At the County Fair. I found the father in his  
kitchen.

For years he had driven a dray and the heavy  
lifting

Had worn him down. So through his evenings  
He slept by the kitchen stove as I found him.  
The mother was crying and ironing.

I thought about the mother,

For she brought me a photograph

Taken at a street fair on her wedding day.

She was so trim and white and he so neat and  
alert

In the picture with their friends about them——  
I saw that she wanted me to know their dignity  
from the first.

But afterward I thought more about the father.  
For as he came with me to the door I could not for-  
bear  
To say how bright and near the stars seemed.  
Then he leaned and peered from beneath his low  
roof,  
And he said:  
*"There used to be a star called the Nord Star."*

## PROSE NOTES

### I

#### THE BUREAU

In anger, in irritation, in argument, what happens  
to you and me?

Something fine weaving us round is torn open.

Something fine permeating us is drawn from the  
veins.

Presences waiting to understand us retreat to a  
farther ante-room of us.

Little cells are incommunicably sealed.

All this happened to me and some strange progress  
was halted until something in me could be  
repaired.

The whole race halted with me.

The light of the remotest star, do you imagine that  
it did not know?

Innumerable influences ceased to pour upon us all.  
And it was because someone left the attic window  
open and it had rained on an old bureau.

## II

### MINUET

I went from Fifth avenue into the Plaza on a  
sunny Winter morning.

There on a little stage it was Spring. A shepherdess walked.

Beside a stream girls were tying garlands. A harp  
was touched.

The shepherdess and her lovers danced a minuet on  
the bright emerald of that shining field.

Down by Brooklyn Bridge——

Now this sharp contrast will shock you, but we  
must not interrupt the minuet——

I know a place down by Brooklyn Bridge where a  
woman

(Young, once pretty, still with tender eyes)

Carries water up five flights of stairs to do washing.

I watched the minuet and I thought about that  
woman.

Did God create two worlds?

Or has man made a world? And can man see that  
his world is good?



### III

#### THE DINING ROOM

I laid the blue dishes on the table.

The dining room was still and sunny.

Zinnias were in a brown basket,

The grape-fruit plant was glossy in a window.

Skilful fingers had wrought the border of the curtain.

My grand-mother's blue pitcher was on the side-board.

There were chestnut leaves in the brown rug.

Barometer and thermometer recorded miracle on the rose wall.

Dark wood paneled and beamed us in together.

As I worked these exquisite patient familiar things let me within.

They let me look with their eyes, feel with their beating pulses of hurrying molecules.

I perceived how locomotion and consciousness and  
self-consciousness have advanced us.

By what means shall we go forward now?

Does anyone wonder at my slow patience as I  
wonder at the slow patience of these exquisite  
and familiar things?

## IV

### PARADISE AND PURGATORY

Do you ever go into your room and find familiar  
things unfamiliar.

Muslin curtains thinned by moonlight,  
Open window, candle, mirror, expectant chairs,  
Long smooth waiting bed—do they not bear an-  
other aspect

As if you had divined them doing their duty,  
As if to be inanimate clearly involved a process,  
As if they were surprised at their creeping task  
of going back to earth, rising in plants, quick-  
ening into beings.

That is the great work of those patient things.

That is why they look so intent.

So with all your preoccupation in dressing for  
to-day

Your object is the same as that of these humble  
ones.

Only you have reached a paradise where you can  
hasten your way.

But these others are yet in purgatory.

V

AT LEAST . . .

On that day of wild joyous wind  
I filled my being with warm hurrying air.  
The pouring sun was in my heart like water in a  
well.

I ran in the pulsing tonic currents.  
And all the time, melodious in my mind,  
There beat and strove the measure of a tune.  
Then for a breath I understood: Glory without  
and flame within,  
They passioned to belong to each other.  
I—I was the interruption.

From that time I gave my body to be a harp:  
Wind of the world without, breath of the soul  
within,  
I will try to let you interflow.  
August Presences, at least, at least may I not hin-  
der you.

## VI

### ROSES

Only once have I been sure that a rose answered  
me.

Always the reticence of roses was the aloofness of  
the peak

A rose would never admit me, speak to me,  
Listen to me, reply to me, do other than suffer me.  
But one day after our barbarous fashion I lifted  
a rose to my face.

Suddenly, thrillingly, the rose replied. It, too,  
touched at me.

We had something to exchange.

What am I to do that this shall be true of every  
flower,

Every animal, every stone, every manufactured  
article,

Every created object—yes, even every person of  
the world?

## VII

### SPRING EVENING

I heard her at the telephone.

"Do come early," she was saying, "while the light lasts.

The dog-wood is in blossom, the mountains are wonderful.

It is," she said, "too heavenly. Do come, while the light lasts. . . ."

Outside on the veranda I could see the light,  
I could see the dog-wood in bloom and a mountain  
*And more!*

What else there was I am trying to tell:

Not colour for I am no artist. Not glamour for  
I am not in love;

Not any more magic than I am accustomed to;

Not presence I think—though perhaps after all  
it was presence.

But something else was there, exquisite, insistent.  
When she came back I looked up to see if it met  
her.

But she only said: "It is too heavenly.  
I hope they will come while the light lasts."  
I knew that she did not see what I saw.  
But what did I see. . . .



## VIII

### SECOND SIGHT

Can the world have been created for you and me  
to do all that fills our days:

Care of a house, lawn, shop, billion dollar business?  
These are not enough for us.

Can the world have been created for the nations  
to do all that fills their days:

Trading, peacefully penetrating, warring,  
Or when the mood changes, motoring down one an-  
other's roads, decorating one another, bowing  
at one another's courts?

These are not enough for the nations.

What is the world for?

Once in an apple orchard at mid-day  
I had a moment of second sight as I watched a  
child at play.

She shone with light like a holy child. She was  
pure.

She was growing. She was nothing, nothing but  
love.

She was all that we might be, we and the nations.

She was all that we shall be.

Come, let us face it!

## IX

### DOES SOMETHING WAIT?

Go and wait somewhere. Take no book, no paper,  
no solitaire or needle task.

Nay but forbid yourself also that you reckon the  
profit or plan a feast

Or discern dust on the lamp;

That you consider to whom to sell or what to wear.

Go and wait somewhere, with forgotten muscles.

Now does something wait with you, glad and wel-  
coming that you are free to turn to it?

Then you have bread that you know not of and it  
is brought to you.

Or do you merely sit with an hundred fibres in you  
pressing to be gone?

Then you are in danger of starvation.

By this means we may almost know what we are.

## X

### DOORS

At the edge of consciousness is a little door.

What goes by?

Now a wing of brightness, of colour, of something  
out there that I love more than I am accus-  
tomed to loving.

Now fares by a delicate shadow, patterned, fleet,  
that I long to know more than I am accus-  
tomed to knowing.

There must be so much more to love and to know  
than the little loves and the little knowledge.

Then someone knocks at my door.

Thou!

The wing of brightness, the delicate shadow were  
but the sign.

What am I to do?

I will find my way to the edge of my consciousness,

I will gain the door, I will have my freedom,  
I will love and know and be all being.  
Thou art the liberator. Why it is true. . . .  
"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

## XI

### LEVITATION

Three times that day came the sense of levitation.  
As if court-house walk, walnut shadow, a length  
of sunny lawn let her go by with no tribute of  
her touch.

It seemed as if the wonderful would happen.

She waited, prepared for the vision.

The day flowered, ripened, mellowed, fell upon  
night.

No presence opened or signaled.

Then she went to embosom that which the hours  
had left her.

She faced her day, and her day gathered itself as  
a living thing with a voice and deep eyes.

It said, I was wonderful.

Yet the only thing to happen that day had been  
this:

Old Edgerton Bascom came to the porch, selling  
buttons.

She bought from him, picked her dahlias for his  
wife.

He went away, comforted, restored to self-respect  
by her purchase.

Perhaps when levitation comes it will be a matter  
of this kind

Rather than of calculation and reckoning.

## XII

### ENCHANTMENT

In this house I perform all as seriously as may  
be required.

I accept my desk, my little tools, lamp, paper.

I write in the one language which I have been  
taught and about the few things with which  
I am familiar.

I eat the little round of food which it is said  
will nourish my body.

About my books I am docile and I learn from  
them.

I look no farther than my window permits.

When I wish to emerge I go obediently to the door  
as if there were conceivable no other way of  
exit.

At night I fall into sleep as if that were eternal  
purpose.



I suffer from absence, I submit to distance,  
I am subject to innumerable influences,  
I am open to them all with a sober face.

But all the time I have knowledge that I am something other ;

That all these things shall ultimately have no more power over me.

That I consent to them because of some delicate exigency in this moment of eternity.

Even now I am often free of them.

There was the day when I moved among the hills and lost every sense of difference from them.

With the crowning cloud and the far filament of the river I found myself in common.

The air was vocal with all that is identical and in that hour it offered to me my identity.

I became everything. I had no question to ask for it was I, too, who was answering.

The hour dissolved. The ultimate star was my neighbour.

. . . Suddenly I remembered myself down  
in the valley moving about in a house.  
And I perceived that for years I have been en-  
chanted.  
I am listening to be set free.











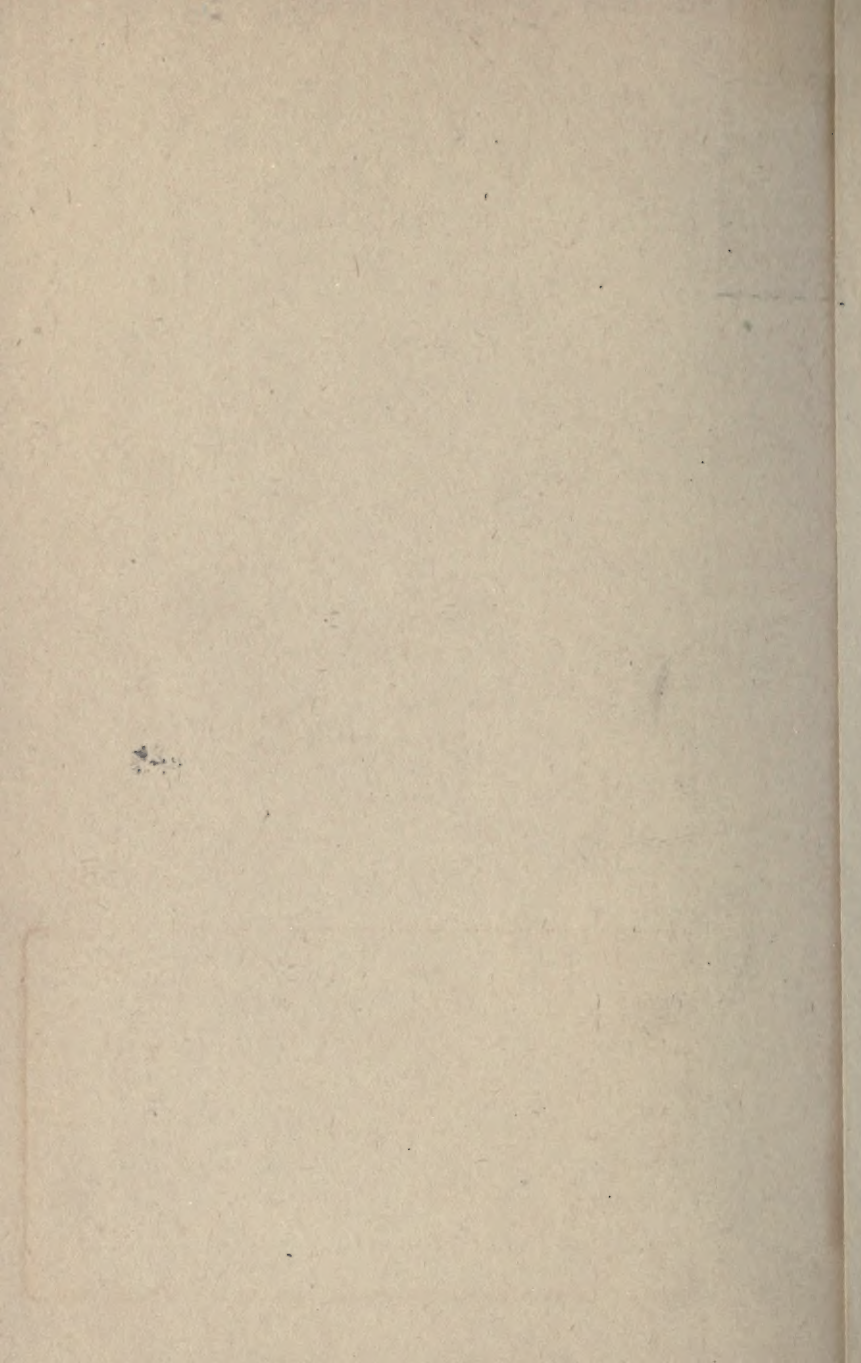














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